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SUBJECT: SPLM SG AMUM PAINTS A BLEAK PICTURE OF THE NCP'S
REACTION TO AN ICC INDICTMENT AND TO SOUTH SUDAN'S
SEPARATION

REF: KHARTOUM 78

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Alberto M. Fernandez, reasons 1.4(b) a
nd (d)

11. (C) Summary. Secretary General of the Sudan Peoples' Liberation Movement (SPLM) told CDA Fernandez that NCP will likely behave normally after the announcement of an ICC indictment of Government of National Unity (GNU) President Al-Bashir. But he expects the National Congress Party (NCP) to quietly mobilize groups and incite them to commit some "violent and angry acts" and then stop them, in order to prove that the NCP still holds its grip on power. Amum warned that the NCP will rig upcoming national elections in order to keep President Al-Bashir in power after an ICC indictment. While the SPLM will participate in elections, the only thing it can do is try to prevent the NCP from rigging the elections too much, according to the SPLM Sec Gen. Amum also expressed concern about the NCP's growing program of arming tribes across Sudan in order to create chaos among different groups. He said the NCP is arming southern tribes against one another as well as northern Arab tribes along the North/South border, according to the SPLM official. Amum also explained that the South has its own problems of lawlessness and corruption. He characterized the SPLM as being in the "worst state it has ever been in" and said that it needed stronger leadership in order to govern effectively. End Summary.

SPLM SG SEES NCP UNITED BEHIND BASHIR

12. (C) In a 2 February meeting with CDA Fernandez, SPLM Secretary General Pagan Amum said that it is difficult to predict what the National Congress Party (NCP) will do in the event of an ICC indictment of President Al-Bashir. "The indictment almost divided them, but Bashir succeeded" in staying on top because some NCP leaders, particularly in the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) "refused to abandon him", explained Amum. Amum said that some NCP islamists planned to align themselves behind Sudanese Defense Minister Abd al Rahim Muhammed Hussein because of his strong ties to the overall Islamist Movement to overthrow the President, but were not able to mount an opposition to Al-Bashir. Because of this, they (the NCP) are now "more united," said Amum, but Bashir hasn't forgiven those who had planned to align against him. Amum predicted that an indictment of Bashir will eventually lead to an indictment of other top NCP leaders, such as NCP hard-liner and Presidential Advisor Nafie Ali Nafie and GoS Vice President Ali Osman Taha. This will only serve to unify the NCP even more, he said.

13. (C) If an ICC announcement is made, I think things will

continue to be normal, predicted Amum. They (the NCP) will "shout angrily" at everyone, but will "not commit any mistakes" that will lead to a situation of chaos. Amum suggested that the NCP will allow for "limited violence and anger" (by mobilizing groups to do things such as harassing embassy personnel), blame the violence on others, and then quell the situation to show the international community that they are in control. They will want to show the world that the NCP is needed in order to keep peace and control in Sudan, said Amum.

NCP CONTINUES TO ARM TRIBES FOR ITS OWN GAIN

14. (C) Amum surmised that the NCP would move forward with national elections. If Al-Bashir runs for GoS President, "he has to win" because the only place he will be safe is in the palace, explained Amum. In order to ensure that Bashir wins, the NCP will most certainly rig the elections, said the SPLM Sec Gen. In order to create chaos ahead of the South Sudan referendum, the NCP will create a situation of lawlessness by encouraging tribes that they have armed on the North/South border area, particularly in Southern Kordofan, Blue Nile, and White Nile, to move south with their weapons, destroying villages as they go. This will then allow the SAF to move in, "restore order" to a situation the NCP has clandestinely created, and control the oil areas. "They are preparing for a genocide," claimed the excitable Amum. This is a decision by the Islamic Movement of Sudan headed by Defense Minister Hussein, he continued.

15. (C) Amum told CDA Fernandez that the NCP, true to its long-term tradition of arming Arab tribes, has been handing

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out even more weapons than usual to different groups, including parts of rival southern tribes such as the Dinka and the Shilluk. According to Amum, some of the Arab border tribes in recent receipt of weapons are the Riziegat, Hamar, Kenana, Misseriya, Taisha, Hamat, Salam, and the Hawazma. "They have almost made an army out of the Hawazma" by giving 5,000 guns to four chiefs and ex-SAF officers, explained a concerned Amum. "If they (the NCP) continue to be proactive, they can cause a serious breakdown of peace on the North/South border," he said. In the South, the NCP has been re-arming tribes through known troublemakers in the SPLA/M whom were absorbed into the movement, like infamous former South Sudan Defense Force (SSDF) Lieutenant General Paulino Matip, and SPLM traitors such as Lam Akol. The top SPLM official added that recent violence between southern tribes in Warab, Lakes, and Jonglei states has been "directly instigated by the NCP (reftel)." This is being done through the NCP Southern Sector Leader Dr. Riek Gai, said Amum. CDA Fernandez stated that the NCP would like to see the a "bitter divorce" between the North and the South if the South chooses to secede. He said that the USG would continue to warn the NCP that it was aware of what the NCP is plotting and that if the NCP succeeds in undermining the Government of Southern Sudan, the USG will consider the South's collapse to be the fault of the NCP. Amum added that the NCP's creation and instigation of such groups is "short-sighted" and warned that one day the NCP might not be able to turn them off.

THE SPLM'S ELECTORAL STRATEGY

16. (C) CDA Fernandez asked Amum what the SPLM's electoral strategy would be give that the NCP knows Bashir cannot afford to lose the GNU Presidency. The NCP cannot afford not to win presidential elections because Bashir needs to "entrench himself" in the Presidency in order to reassert his legitimacy in the event of an ICC indictment, said Amum. The only way the NCP can assure a win is to rig elections, he continued. "All we (the SPLM) can do is to go ahead with elections and try to prevent the NCP" from rigging the electoral process. This will be tough, explained Amum, because the NCP controls the National Intelligence and Security Service (NISS) and can use election administration

officials to subvert the process. Amum told CDA Fernandez that he believes that it is possible for the SPLM to become the majority party in the GNU National Assembly. "We are not, however, in a position to contest the GNU Presidential elections, although a decision has not officially been taken yet by the party," stated Amum. GoSS President and SPLM Chairman Salva Kiir Mayardit will not be entrusted with running for the GNU Presidency on behalf of the SPLM, he said. "For him to run objectively means that he is someone with a mission to bring about a government that will oversee the division of this country into two parts peacefully and then go home," explained Amum. "For him, this is not the best thing," the Secretary General continued. The best route for GoSS President Salva Kiir is to contest the GoSS Presidency, oversee the secession of southern Sudan, and continue as the founding father of the new country for two terms, remarked Amum. He acknowledged, however, that it will be a problem if the SPLM does not challenge Bashir for the GNU Presidency because it would embolden Bashir to make it even harder for the South to secede. CDA Fernandez asked Amum if the SPLM had thought about running a candidate for the GNU Presidency. Amum said that party stalwarts Abdel Aziz Helou, Yasir Arman, Malik Agar, or even Pagan himself could be offered up, but that it would create a problem for the SPLM in the event that it won the GNU Presidency and that elected would become Kiir's boss. This would "turn the tables within the SPLM", said Amum. Amum also noted that it would be difficult for the SPLM to find a viable candidate from outside the party to rally behind in support of the GNU Presidency slot. Despite the dilemma, CDA Fernandez encouraged the SPLM to challenge the NCP by putting forward a serious candidate, perhaps from a Northern party allied with the SPLM.

PROBLEMS IN THE SOUTH AND WITHIN THE SPLM

17. (C) Amum told CDA Fernandez that "there is no doubt" that southerners would choose a path of secession for southern Sudan in 2011. The SPLM vision of a New Sudan has "receded in a way," explained Amum, because Kiir is not as enthusiastic to pursue the program as was late SPLM leader John Garang. According to Amum, Kiir believes that even if

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the SPLM were to win national elections, the NCP would not let the SPLM assume power, which would lead to another war. "There is no need go to there," said Amum. Kiir believes the path of least resistance is for the country to peacefully split, explained Amum. The vision has also lost traction because the SPLM is "not governing" in the South, said Amum. He lamented that there is a lot of lawlessness and corruption in the South as a result. Amum said that the SPLM will hold a Political Bureau meeting in Juba on February 4-5 to discuss how to provide leadership on issues such as security, building institutions such as law enforcement, and disarmament. "To have peace we must change the direction of the people (in the South)", said Amum. "We must improve governance and enhance the systems and procedures for the delivery of public services," he continued. "There is a need for leadership and Kiir must be more assertive" in visiting people and talking to them so that he can see he is leading, explained Amum. He added that subversive individuals such as Lam Akol and even GOSS VP Riek Machar threaten the survival of the SPLM as a political movement. "The SPLM today is in the worse shape than its ever been; it has many weaknesses as a political party," said Amum. If someone takes us head on, we will suffer, he warned. Amum expressed concern about a small southern political party called United Democratic Southern Front (UDSF), which he said has been propped up by the NCP. The members of the UDSF have a clear and unified vision which is to separate southern Sudan and build a nation there, claimed Amum. They have a few ministers in the GoSS and have created a group of followers whose message is the same; they attack and criticize the SPLM and are very effective in the way they go about it, he said. This is making the bases uncomfortable, warned Amum. "The SPLM will

atrophy if it is not careful," said Amum, likening such a fate to the situation of the beleaguered Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) which led the Palestinian struggle but was emasculated when it assumed power on the West Bank. "We need democracy; it will teach and challenge the SPLM," explained Amum.

18. (C) CDA Fernandez encouraged the SPLM Secretary General to lead his party to be assertive with the NCP. The NCP needs you (the SPLM) now, said Fernandez. "This is the time to extract a political price from them; pressure them," he said.

Amum told the CDA that the SPLM has a plan to do this whereby the SPLM will only work with the NCP if they agree to certain concessions. "The problem, however, is that we (the SPLM) are not working as a team." Amum said that the SPLM would discuss its plan as a group in Juba during the February 4-5 Political Bureau meeting.

COMMENT

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19. (C) Although he is known for his doomsday scenarios, Amum's predictions of the NCP's intention with regard to elections and the referendum, as well as the current direction of the SPLM as a party, are accurate and bear close attention. While we should expect the NCP to do anything it can to retain power, the SPLM is not dissimilar and will do what it can to cement its authority over the South. While the SPLM must do what it can to keep the NCP honest during elections, and work with the NCP to see the CPA through to the referendum, it must take action to put its own house in order. This would better allow it to respond to NCP-inspired crises, as well as trouble-making within its own ranks by the likes of Riek Machar and Lam Akol. Authority in the South poorly implemented could eventually be a greater threat to the SPLM than the nefarious plotters in Khartoum. In providing the NCP cover on the ICC and allowing elections to move forward, the SPLM should seek real concessions from the NCP - for example by ensuring that it gets the referendum legislation that it wants this year, that Abyei's administration is fully funded, and that an acceptable decision on a North-South border is announced.

FERNANDEZ